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Manifesto

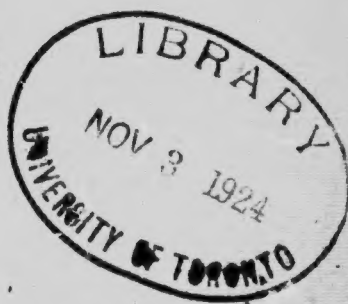
OF THE

Right Hon. Sir Robert Bond,

P.C., K.C.M.S.,

Premier,

1908.



ST. JOHNS, N.F.:

Evening Telegram print, 1908.

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MANIFESTO

OF

*The Right Hon. Sir Robt. Bond, P.C., K.C.M.G., LL.D.,
PREMIER.*

TO THE ELECTORS OF NEWFOUNDLAND :

GENTLEMEN, —

A few weeks from this date you will be required, under the law, to record your votes for the election of your Representatives in the Parliament of this Country. This will be a high privilege, as well as a most important duty : a high privilege, because to you is left a free, untrammelled exercise of the right to select those who shall offer themselves as Candidates for your suffrage. Men who, for the next four years, shall mould the destinies of our country, and it is a most important duty because, as the Grand Jury of the Country, you are expected to weigh well the merits of the respective Candidates, the principles and policies of the respective parties, and to render your decision in accordance with the dictates of conscience alone. Upon the judgment you form and the pronouncement you make at the polls on the 2nd day of November next will hinge the future welfare of your native land.

For the past eight years you have entrusted the Government of our Country to me, and those who have been associated with me as members of the Liberal Party.

I now come before you as the leader and responsible head of that Party to challenge your fair criticism and to claim your approbation. Look, if you please, into the whole tenor of my conduct. See whether my ambition or self-interest has caused me to sacrifice any public in-

terest, or to depart in any degree from the strict line of duty. Has the trust that you reposed in me been faithfully respected, and has the country prospered by the blessing of God upon a wise administration of our public affairs ? These are the questions that I unflinchingly suggest to the intelligent electors of Newfoundland.

Down through the ages has come the declaration, "By men's deeds you shall judge them." Not, mark you, by their promises or professions as respects the future. By my deeds, by the acts of omission and commission of my Government during the past eight years, I desire to be judged. If I, and those associated with me, are judged by that standard, then I can confidently rely upon a continuation of your favour and support.

For several months past the Opposition Party, in their newspapers, have been assailing me and the members of my Government with the coarsest abuse, the most flagrant falsehoods, and the grossest misrepresentation. Never before was the country deluged with such abominable literature in an attempt to degrade and discredit political opponents. To imagine that the electors of this country can be led by such means to support the **COMBINATION** that now opposes the Liberal Party would be to insult their intelligence. I welcome the close and honest criticism of my political opponents, but I treat with contempt their abuse and misrepresentation, and I believe

that an intelligent public does likewise. If ever there was a time in our history when independent men should make their existence felt, it is now. Not merely because that huge parasite, a venal press, is threatening to degrade the public life of the country, and to deter respectable men from entering into it, but because combined with this is an attempt on the part of unscrupulous demagogues to tempt the people to their ruin. I firmly believe that at the present time it is the duty of every patriotic Newfoundlander, whether he calls himself a Tory or a Liberal, to work with all his might to ensure the national condemnation of principles that can only bring disaster and humiliation and ridicule upon his Country. **CONSIDER THE MEN WHO ARE ASPIRING TO CONDUCT THE AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY IN OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT; CONSIDER THE PRINCIPLES THEY PROFESS, AND THEIR PUBLIC RECORD.**

I am content to leave my public record and that of my Government to the impartial and independent electors. They are the conscience of the Country, that rewards and punishes its public men. I rejoice to believe that abuse, misrepresentation and calumnies are impotent before the triumphant evidence of facts, and therefore it is facts alone that I shall herein set forth for the consideration of the people.

For two years prior to my being called upon by His Excellency the Governor, in the year 1900, to take up the reins of Government, the Tory Party was in power, and the Country witnessed a condition of things that would have been a disgrace and a reproach to any community. In the year 1897 they had gone to the electors pledged by their leader :

1. To "No further concessions to R. G. Reid, Railway Contractor";

2. To "The readjustment of the tariff so as to reduce the cost of the most common necessities used by our fishermen and the poorer classes generally";

3. To "The purification of the Civil Service by sweeping away all useless and unnecessary offices and reducing the salaries and perquisites of overpaid officials";

4. To "The reduction of expenditure."

Ten years have rolled away since then, but the electors will not have forgotten how those they placed in power to fulfil these pledges betrayed their trust; how the public interests were shamefully bartered away and the Country was well-nigh brought to ruin. They will remember that, instead of making "No further concessions to R. G. Reid," the earliest act of the Tory Party and their allies in the House of Assembly was to transfer to him the railway, dock, telegraph lines, and two million five hundred and fifty-five thousand acres of the best lands in the country, included in which were three hundred and thirty-one thousand four hundred and eighty-six acres held by Squatters, Mining Proprietors, and the holders of timber leases, and eight hundred and fifty-two thousand four hundred and twenty acres within three miles of the shore, which is known as the Fishermen's Limits.

The Electors will remember that, instead of "a readjustment of the tariff so as to reduce the cost of the most common necessities used by the fishermen and the poorer classes generally," the Tory Party placed fifty per cent. increased duty on fishermen's lines, one hundred per cent. increased duty on his cordage, and under a revised tariff increased taxation generally by over One hun-

dred and fifty thousand dollars per annum.

The Electors will remember how that the promised purification of the Civil Service consisted of the most heartless and cruel acts towards public servants, scores of officials being thrust out of office in mid-winter and their families exposed to want and starvation, in order to make room for Party adherents.

The Electors will remember how, instead of "a reduction of expenditure," we witnessed widespread demoralization consequent upon the wholesale distribution of the public funds, in the shape of able-bodied pauper relief: about one-eighth of the total revenue of the country, or **OVER TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS** being distributed in flour and molasses, through Party supporters in the outports, during the first three months they were in office.

And further that, during their first year of office, the sum of Three hundred thousand dollars was expended to improve the properties that they had handed over to the Reids under the Railway Deal.

The Electors will remember that, to such a condition were the finances of the Colony brought, that the then Minister of Finance declared, in introducing his Budget, "It was necessary to solicit aid from some quarter or other in order to carry our heavy responsibilities, and in order to reduce taxation we must obtain aid from the Mother Country."

THIS WAS THE CONDITION OF THINGS WHEN HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR CALLED UPON ME TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS. This statement stands upon no authority of mine. It is proved by incontrovertible records. The task assigned to me was to bring

order out of chaos—not an easy task, by any means—but, being backed by the moral support of nearly the whole people of the country, and blessed in my efforts by Divine Providence in a remarkable degree, I have the gratification of seeing our country to-day in a more prosperous and contented condition than it ever was before.

Every unprejudiced and honest man who looks back over the eight years that have elapsed since the present Government entered upon their work must admit, and feel thankful for, the steady improvement that has taken place in the condition of the country. All the energies of the Government have been combined to make Newfoundland not only a home to be loved, but a home to be respected. The scandalous betrayal of public trust, the shameful Railway Deal under the plea of bankruptcy, for which my predecessors in office and their allies were responsible, had brought our country into disrespect abroad, and had awakened feelings of shame, humiliation and dismay at home. My first business was to endeavour to undo, so far as possible, the mischief that had been wrought.

The Railway, Telegraphs and Crown Lands that had been bartered away to the Reids were, by Act of Parliament, taken back from them.

The Railway had cost the people of this Country **THIRTEEN MILLION DOLLARS**, and **HAD BEEN GIVEN AWAY** to the Reids for **ONE MILLION DOLLARS**. We returned them the money they paid, together with the interest thereon, and again vested the fee-simple of the Railway in the people of this Country.

The Telegraphs had cost the people of this Country **ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY THOUSAND DOLLARS**, and had been handed

over to the Reids, **NOT ONLY FREE OF ANY CHARGE WHATSOEVER, BUT THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN PLEDGED UNDER THE RAILWAY DEAL TO PAY THEM SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR OPERATING THEM.** We paid them the amount awarded by arbitration for these lines and took them back.

The amount awarded by the arbitrators—namely: One million five hundred and three thousand one hundred dollars—bears eloquent testimony to the criminal sacrifice of this public asset in the interest of the Reids, if we **ACCEPT THE AWARD AS AN HONEST ONE.** The handsome revenue of Fifty-one thousand seven hundred dollars per annum now passing into the Treasury from these telegraphs, an amount that will be ever-increasing as the business of the country advances, bears equally eloquent testimony to the wisdom of the present Government in taking possession of those lines in the public interest. Further, the public now receives the benefit of more than fifty per cent. reduction on all messages transmitted within the Colony—the former rate for ten words being fifty cents, and now only twenty cents.

The Two million five hundred and fifty-five thousand acres of land given to the Reids for operating the Railway that was to be his own were taken back from him at a cost of thirty cents per acre. It will be remembered that included in this enormous area were lands held under mining and timber leases by a number of enterprising citizens, also homesteads that had been established by the thrift and industry of hundreds of poor settlers, and Eight hundred thousand acres of timber land within three miles of the sea, which it had ever been the policy of the Liberal Party to reserve for the exclusive

use of our fishermen. **The present Government returned to the poor settlers and mining and timber proprietors the lands of which they had been despoiled,** set apart for the use of the fishermen all the lands within three miles of the sea, and placed at the disposal of all who were prepared to comply with the conditions of the Crown Lands Act the balance remaining. The wisdom of this land policy of the Government is made evident by the fact that **when the Government took charge of the public affairs eight years ago** the total revenue from all Crown Lands was only Three thousand three hundred and forty-one dollars, **while last year it amounted to Fifty-nine thousand three hundred dollars.**

The notorious Railway Deal of 1898 also embraced the Bay Steam Service of the Country, and provided a scale of charges that weighed most heavily upon the travelling public and hurt the community, but no provision was made therein to meet the requirements of the people of the North East Coast and that section of the Island between St. John's and Placentia. The present Government, in order to remedy this condition of affairs, entered into a contract for a Coastal Service, North and South, to be performed by first-class steamers specially built for those services, and in that contract they stipulated for a scale of reasonable charges for passenger and freight traffic.

To-day the public has a Coastal Steam Service never equalled in this Country. This service, while directly conveniencing the travelling public and facilitating trade, has indirectly had the effect of bringing about a reform in the Bay Steam Service, for the passenger and freight tariffs have been lowered, and the public now receive a consideration not previously extended to them.

I have, so far, only dealt with matters incident to the undoing, so far as possible, of the evils that arose out of the Railway Deal of 1898. What has been accomplished has not been done without considerable cost, but let it be remembered that for this expenditure the perpetrators of that political crime are solely responsible. An attempt has been made by the Opposition newspapers to fix this responsibility upon the present Government. Never was there a more unjust or dishonest charge. My Government received a mandate from the people at the polls in 1900 to take back from the Reids the properties of which they had been despoiled under the Railway Deal. We carried out that mandate in a legal and constitutional manner, and EVERY CENT THAT IT HAS COST THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY TO REGAIN POSSESSION OF THEIR PROPERTIES IS BUT A MEASURE OF THE TERRIBLE WRONG THAT WAS INFLICTED UPON THEM BY THOSE WHOM THEY TRUSTED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THIS COUNTRY IN 1897, AND THOSE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE WHO AIDED THEM IN PASSING OVER THOSE PROPERTIES TO THE REIDS.

HERE I WOULD EMPHASIZE THE FACT THAT THE LEADING MEN IN THE COMBINATION THAT NOW FLAUNTS ITSELF BEFORE THE COUNTRY AS "THE PEOPLES PARTY" WERE THE PERPETRATORS OF THAT CRIME.

In continuing a review of the present Government's record it will be observed that all classes in the community have received due and proper consideration.

THE FISHERMEN.

Being the largest producing class, and the very backbone of the coun-

try, they have met with special recognition in the hands of the present Government. As I have previously stated, the former Tory Government placed fifty per cent. increase of duty on the fisherman's lines, and one hundred per cent. increased duty on his cordage. One of the first acts of the present Government was to make their lines and twines free: also salt, which is an absolute necessity for the cure of his voyage. We also took cognizance of the fact that flour, molasses and kerosene oil enter very largely into his daily consumption, and we therefore placed these commodities upon the free list. The duties remitted upon these articles during the past eight years amount to the following:—

On Lines and Twines	\$73,552 28
Salt	89,501 84
Flour	409,065 00
Molasses	498,641 10
Kerosene Oil	265,076 84

making a sum total of **ONE MILLION THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN DOLLARS**, from the payment of which the fishermen, in particular, have been relieved; or, to put it more plainly, this enormous sum would have come out of the pockets of the people if the present Government had not taken off the duty, and therefore they are by that amount better off to-day.

Appreciating that lighthouses and fog alarms are of the greatest advantage to the fisherman—that he is largely dependent upon them for the protection of his life and property—the present Government, during its eight years of office, has erected thirty-six lighthouses and seven fog alarms, and has now under construction nine more lighthouses, which it is hoped will be in operation by the close of the present year.

When the present Government took charge of public affairs there

were only forty-six lighthouses and four fog alarms around the whole of our coast line. **Therefore, during its term of office, the present Government has erected as many light-houses, and NEARLY DOUBLE AS MANY FOG ALARMS, as were ERECTED DURING THE WHOLE PERIOD OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS PRECEDING.**

Telegraphs have also been established along the Labrador Coast to aid the fishermen in the conduct of their business.

With a view to further aiding the fishermen scattered along the shores of this Island, the sum of **two hundred and seven thousand two hundred and four dollars** has been expended during the same period in the erection of public wharves, landings, breakwaters and harbour improvements.

The present Government has also placed upon the Statute Book an Act which entitles the fishermen to the following bounties on the vessels that are built in accordance with Schedule :—

On vessels from 15 tons and not over 40 tons, built under Schedule D., a bounty of...	\$4 per ton
On vessels from 15 tons and upwards, built under Schedule C., a bounty of	\$5 per ton
On vessels from 20 tons and upwards, built under Schedule B., a bounty of	\$8 per ton
On vessels from 80 tons and upwards, built under Schedule A., a bounty of	\$10 per ton

Previous to the passing of the Act referred to, the highest bounty paid was \$4 00 per ton. Schedule B., under which the \$8.00 per ton bounty is now paid, is similar to the old Schedule under which the \$4 00 bounty was paid ; so it will be observed that the present Government has doubled the bounty for that class of vessel.

In order to still further encourage the building of vessels in this coun-

try, spars and hardwood plank, not obtainable here, are admitted duty free.

In order to stimulate our fishermen to turn their attention to Cold Storage, the present Government has made regulations by virtue of which any fisherman setting up a Cold Storage Plant shall be entitled to a grant of **Thirty per cent. of the cost of such Plant, and thereafter for five years** from the commencement of operations to a grant of **Twenty per cent.** of the expense incurred in conducting the business.

MECHANICS and LABORERS.

Upon our mechanics and labourers the present Government conferred one of the greatest possible boons by the passing of an Act which ensures to every workman who may sustain injury by accident while in his employer's service compensation during such time as he is prevented, by the result of such accident, from earning his daily bread, and secures to his wife and family an amount equal to three years' wages in the event of death resulting from such accident. Up to the date when this Act came into force the consequences of such accidents had fallen upon those least able to bear them, namely : upon the workingman and his family. To-day the risk of whatever work a man engages to perform for another is a charge on the undertaking, and if he sustains any injury to health or limb, or loses his life in the conduct of the business, compensation can be recovered from his employer. The railway employee, the miner, the lumberman, the factory hand, the joiner and carpenter, the cooper, the 'longshoreman, all classes of workmen have now thrown around them the safeguards of this Act.

THE FARMER.

To encourage the farmer in his pursuit, the present Government has

placed upon the Free List fertilizer of all kinds, agricultural implements and machinery, bran, meal, and other preparations for cattle and poultry, wire fencing, and motor engines. They have also arranged for the immediate establishment of an Experimental Farm, so that the farmer may have the advantage, free of cost, of scientific advice and experiment, and the young men may be trained to assist in the development of our agricultural resources.

THE MINER.

Amongst the many hazardous employments of our people is that of mining; the repeated accidents that have been chronicled during recent years bear evidence to that fact. The present Government has been the first to adopt measures to protect the miner in his work. In the year 1906 a Mines Regulation Act was passed, which provides for the proper timbering of shafts, adequate ventilation of workings, regulates the use of explosives, and provides for the daily examination of machinery. The Mines Regulation Act of 1908 establishes special rules for the conduct and guidance of persons acting in the management of mines, and makes it compulsory on the part of the owner, agent or manager of every mine, in the case of accident involving personal injury, to send for medical aid at the expense of such owner, agent or manager, and to keep at such mine proper surgical accessories to meet cases of emergency.

In order to foster mining enterprise, the present Government has placed all mining machinery, fire-clay and fire-brick, dynamite, blasting powder, fuses, hoisting cables, pumping engines, crushers, prospecting drills, and other mining requisites, upon the Free List, and it has also amended the Crown Lands Act so as to offer the most liberal

encouragement to mining prospectors.

THE LUMBERMAN.

The lumberman throughout the country to-day finds his sphere of enterprise enlarged and his rate of wage increased by reason of the inducements that have been held out by the present Government to capitalists to engage in the pulp and paper industry. **I point, I trust, with pardonable pride to the great enterprises in course of establishment at Grand Falls and Bishop's Falls, for I can claim at least a measure of credit for inducing the proprietors of these great enterprises to turn their attention to this country.**

Already at Grand Falls more than **Two Million Dollars** has been expended in labour and material; more than **Eleven hundred** men are at present finding employment there, **and the monthly pay-roll for wages amounts to Forty-five thousand dollars.** The intelligent man will not fail to appreciate that the operation of these great enterprises not only directly benefits the woodsman, but by drawing away labour from other industries, considerably enhances the price of labour throughout the whole country.

For my efforts in connection with the establishment of these enterprises I have been assailed and vilified in unmeasured terms by the press supporting the Opposition Party. It would be difficult to conceive of a more unpatriotic course than my opponents have adopted in this particular. My aim and endeavour has been, and shall

be in the future, to aid in creating new industries that shall present inducements to the young men of our country to make their homes in their native land, rather than in the neighbouring Provinces or the United States of America. Thousands of our young men are to-day but sojourners in their native country by reason of the inducements which diversified industries in the neighbouring continent hold out to them; and yet in the face of this fact we find my political opponents, who masquerade as "The People's Party," **prostituting pen and voice in denunciation of a policy that means the gathering home of the sons of Newfoundland, and the creation of a wider patriotism, for there can be no real patriotism where there are but temporary homes.**

AS REGARDS ALL CLASSES IN THE COMMUNITY.

I point with thankfulness and pride to the fact that during the present Government's term of office we have been able to reduce taxation by the sum of One million four hundred and twenty-two thousand eight hundred and forty-one dollars. Here are the figures taken from the original records in the Customs Department:—

1901.

Lines and		
Twines—Free	\$52,643	\$7,238.40

1901-2.

Molasses.....Reduced three cents per gall.		
Salt.....Reduced twenty cents per ton		
Molasses.....1,331,788 galls	\$40,157.46	
Salt.....50,600 tons	11,132.00	
Lines and		
Twines.....	\$60,846	8,366.32
		\$59,655.78

1902-3.

Molasses.....1,331,788 galls	39,953.54
Salt.....48,999 tons	10,779.78
Lines and	
Twines.....	\$56,102
	7,714.03
	\$58,447.44

1903-4.

Flour..... Reduced four cents per gallon		
Kerosene Oil...Reduced six cents per gall		
Molasses.....Reduced four cents per gall		
Flour 121,311 brls.	\$30,352.75	
Molasses..... 982,578 galls	68,789.46	
Kerosene Oil... 244,975 galls	16,168.35	
Molasses..... 488,338 galls	14,650.14	
Salt 46,716 tons	10,277.52	
Lines and		
Twines.....	46,916	6,450.95
		\$146,680.17

1904-5.

Flour 371,407 brls	\$92,851.75
Kerosene Oil... 844,400 galls	55,730.40
Molasses..... 1,436,065 galls	100,524.55
Salt 70,353 tons	15,477.06
Lines and	
Twines.....	\$52,944
	7,279.80
	\$271,864.16

1905-6.

Currants and Raisins from Greece reduced Three cents per pound.		
Currants and		
Raisins.....	841,790 lbs.	\$27,779.07
Flour 411,781 brls.	102,945.25	
Kerosene Oil.. 907,356 galls.	59,885.49	
Molasses 1,058,036 galls.	74,062.52	
Salt..... 64,149 tons.	14,112.78	
Lines and		
Twines	\$68,397	9,404.58
		\$288,189.69

1906-7.

Currants and		
Raisins.....	451,756 lbs.	\$14,907.94
Flour 365,427 brls.	91,356.75	
Kerosene Oil.. 945,014 galls.	62,370.92	
Molasses..... 1,239,969 galls.	86,793.83	
Salt 48,090 tons.	10,579.80	
Lines and		
Twines	\$106,289	14,614.73
		\$280,627.97

1907-8.

Currants and		
Raisins.....	899,016 lbs.	\$29,667.52
Flour 366,234 brls.	91,558.50	
Kerosene Oil... 1,074,571 galls.	70,921.68	
Lines and		
Twines	\$90,789	12,483.48
Molasses 1,262,352 galls.	88,364.64	
Salt..... 77,920 tons.	17,143.40	
		\$310,138.22

Total Reduction in Taxation.

1900-01.....	\$7,238.40
1901-02.....	59,693.78
1902-03.....	58,447.44
1903-04.....	146,680.17
1904-05.....	271,864.16
1905-06.....	288,199.69
1906-07.....	280,627.97
1907-08.....	319,138.22
	\$1,422,841.83

I would ask the electors of the country also to note that, while the above material reductions were made in taxation, out of the taxes collected the following amounts have been handed back to the people in excess of the ordinary grants, viz. :

For Roads.....	\$409,444.41
For Marine Works.....	207,204.00
For Education.....	442,773.20

making a total of **One million fifty-nine thousand four hundred and twenty-one dollars**;

Further, that the handsome sum of **five hundred thousand dollars** has been placed to the credit of a trust account in order to meet adverse times, if the vicissitudes of the fisheries should bring such about.

In addition to all this, the present Government has constructed during the past eight years two thousand four hundred and sixty-six miles of telegraph, and has in course of construction at the present time two hundred and forty miles more. This includes a line from St. John's to Portugal Cove which will connect with Bell Island. At the end of the present year, then, the present Government will have constructed more than double as many miles of telegraph

as were built by all other preceding Governments.

EDUCATION.

When, in the year 1887, I introduced the Ballot Act, which conferred upon every man of twenty-one years of age and upwards the right to vote, and thus perform one of the highest privileges of citizenship, I was not unmindful of the fact that, in order to enable our people to reach the true standard of citizenship, education would have to be liberally encouraged. As soon, therefore, as I was placed by you in a position from which I could direct the policy of the Government, I proceeded without delay to construct this broad avenue of all progress. During my term of office four hundred and forty-two thousand seven hundred and seventy-three dollars, or nearly a half a million of dollars, have been expended in this direction: nor shall I rest satisfied until there is an up-to-date school in every settlement in Newfoundland.

This, I submit, is a great record—a record that has never been equalled in the whole history of this land; consider it, in the light of the declaration made by my predecessors in office just previous to my taking charge, that the Colony was on the verge of bankruptcy, and that it was necessary to appeal to the Mother Country for aid.

THE CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY GENERALLY.

The condition of the country to-day is in striking contrast with that which appertained when I took up the reins of Government, as the official records will prove and the experience of our people will corroborate. **For instance: the exports of the country represent the earning power of the people.** In the year 1898-99 the exports amounted in value to six million nine hundred and thirty-six thousand three hundred and fifteen dollars. The exports last year amounted in value to twelve million one hundred and one thousand one hundred and sixty-one dollars. **This shows an increased earning power of twenty-one dollars and eight cents per head of the population of the country.**

The imports of the country represent the increased purchasing power of the people. In the year 1898-99 the imports amounted in value to six million three hundred and eleven thousand two hundred and forty-four dollars. The imports last year amounted in value to ten million four hundred and twenty-six thousand and forty dollars. **This shows an increased purchasing power of sixteen dollars and sixty-five cents per head of the population of the country.**

Again, the internal trade of the country, and the profits arising out of it, are better distributed than ever before, as is shown by the Customs Returns, which declare that the direct imports from abroad by ouportt

business firms have increased over one hundred per cent. during the past eight years.

Behold, then, in brief, the financial record of the present Government, and the outcome of its administration !

I have ever appealed to those who are the depositaries of sober, rational, independent and honest feeling, and I appeal to them on this occasion.

My political opponents are clamouring for a change, and allege, as a justification, that "eight years is long enough for any Party to be in power." Fortunately for our country, they have no power to bring about that change; the power rests solely with the independent electors of this country.

THEY WANT A CHANGE FROM WHAT? Is it from the condition of prosperity and happiness that characterizes our Island Home to-day?

A CHANGE TO WHAT? Is it to the condition of things that appertained when the present Government took charge of affairs? when wilful waste and woeful want went hand in hand? when, as that great statesman, the Right Honourable Joseph Chamberlain, declared "the functions of Government were virtually transferred to Railway Contractor Reid," and the press of Great Britain characterized such transfer as "a hideous blunder and a shameful political crime?" when the Executive Government became a by-word and a reproach because of the disgraceful wrangling amongst the members thereof in the mad scramble for place, emolument and power?

Do the electors of the country want such a change? It is well

for them to remember that those who are clamouring for such a change to-day are precisely the men who demanded a change in 1897, and by specious falsehoods and false promises induced the electorate to grant them the change whereby they obtained power to accomplish the evils to which I have alluded, and from which generations yet unborn will have to suffer.

The one plain question to be put before the people of the country is: **What is the real object and what would be the actual result of such a change** in the Government of the Country as is desired by the Combination now clamouring for it? **It needs me to enter into no detail and to make no specialty of prophesy to point out to you what the inevitable result of such a change must be.**

THERE IS STILL A FURTHER RECORD TO BE NOTED: My Government can point to the settlement of the French Shore Question as one of the achievements of which they may feel justly proud. For many years the people of the country had been bearing with a condition of things that was well-nigh intolerable. Along eight hundred miles of coastline, between Cape Ray and Cape John, they were unable to obtain title to the lands upon which they were born, and which by their industry they had converted into fertile homesteads. Neither could they ply their avocation as fishermen in the waters that rolls in at their doors unless by the permission of the subjects of France. To-day there is no French Shore Question, and our fishermen can pursue their business in every creek and cove along that shore without let or hindrance.

Our late Governor, Sir Cavendish Boyle, bore eloquent testimony to the meed of praise due to myself and my Government in that connection in a letter which he addressed to me, and which may be found in the Journal of the House of Assembly for 1904. Sir Cavendish Boyle said:—

“ I CONGRATULATE YOU,
“ YOUR COLLEAGUES, AND
“ THE WHOLE COMMUNITY
“ MOST CORDIALLY ON THE
“ SPLENDID RESULTS WHICH
“ HAVE BEEN OBTAINED, AND
“ I WISH HERE TO REPEAT
“ WHAT I STATED TO YOU
“ LAST EVENING, THAT YOUR
“ EVERY ACTION THROUGH-
“ OUT THE NEGOTIATIONS
“ HAS BEEN IN DEFENSE OF
“ THE COLONY'S INTERESTS
“ AND TO SECURE TO ALL
“ HERE THE FULLEST PRO-
“ TECTION AS REGARDS EX-
“ ISTING RIGHTS AND THE
“ GREATEST ADVANTAGES
“ UNDER ANY NEW COND.
“ TIONS.”

THE AMERICAN FISHERY QUESTION.

In connection with the important question of American rights under the Treaty of 1818, the present Government may also justly claim the approval of the electors of this Country. They have been waging a battle against American aggression, and the difficulties of the situation have been increased by the attitude of His Majesty's Government in relation thereto. Our laws were being defied and the continuance of our fisheries threatened; hence the absolute necessity for a firm and decided course of action on the part of the Government of this Colony. That such firm and decided action was taken by the present Government, and by myself personally, the

records prove, with the result that, at my instance, the Governments concerned have decided to submit the questions at issue to the arbitration of the Hague Tribunal.

It will be remembered that a *modus vivendi* was entered into between the British and American Governments that purported to set aside the laws of this country, and that would have converted the Newfoundland fishermen into mere servants of the Americans; that an Order of the Imperial Council was proclaimed for the purpose of enforcing the said *modus vivendi*, and that the action of the present Government rendered both instruments inoperative. The firmness of the present Government has received its reward, for to-day the plan that was agreed upon between the Government and the fishermen of the Colony last year for the conduct of the fishery has taken the place of the objectionable *modus vivendi*, and the Imperial Order-in-Council that virtually suspended the Constitution **HAS BEEN REPEALED.** The fight that has been waged and the battle that has been won are of far greater importance than at first sight may appear, for they really involved the question of our rights and privileges under the Constitution.

THE ELECTORS WILL NOT BE LIKELY TO FORGET that at the very moment when the Constitution of this Country was threatened and the relations between this Government and His Majesty's Government were at their severest tension, the present leader of the Opposition Party forsook the ranks of the present Government. A constitutional and a moral responsibility attaches to a member of a Government which he cannot shirk or set aside without forfeiting his

claim to the confidence and respect of those who placed him in that position of trust. Never at any period in our history did this constitutional and moral responsibility attach more strongly to a Minister than under the circumstances to which I have referred; yet at this crisis the present leader of the Opposition Party, under cover of a peurile excuse that cannot be regarded by any sensible man as aught else but a mere pretext, abandoned his position of trust and responsibility to become the leader of a Party that during the past two years have aided and abetted the Americans in their acts of aggression, and have done everything in their power to weaken the Government in its struggle to uphold the Laws, and the Honour, and the Constitution of our Country.

IN CONCLUSION.

I have stated that the question in dispute between the Government of this Country and the United States Government, and which so materially affect the fishing interests of the whole community, are to come before the Hague Tribunal. I have won this advantage only after persistent effort. Our success before that Tribunal will depend upon the manner in which our case is worked up and presented. **It is for you, the electors of this country, to say whether the conduct of this great case shall be continued in my hands or handed over to those who have done everything in their power to destroy it.** The attitude of the Opposition Party in relation to this question may be

gathered from the columns of their newspapers during the last two years.

THERE IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT QUESTION that materially affects the interests of the people of this Country that will shortly come before the Imperial Privy Council, namely: the Labrador Boundary Question. As you are aware, the Canadian Government has laid claim to a vast area of territory at Labrador that has ever been under the jurisdiction of Newfoundland. To this matter I have devoted much research, and upon it I have conferred with some of the ablest lawyers in England. **It is for you, the electors of this Country, to consider whether it is in the interests of the country that the completion of the work in relation to this matter shall be taken out of my hands and confided to those who sacrificed the public interests in 1898.**

There is also the matter of the further claims of the Reid Newfoundland Company arising out of the iniquitous Railway Deal of 1898.

I have declared that in view of the experience of the Colony in connection with the arbitration of former claims, so long as I am at the head of affairs there shall be no more arbitrations, and that all such claims must be brought before the Supreme Court of this Colony. The Reid Newfoundland Government have endeavoured to force the Government into arbitration by an appeal to the Supreme Court, but that attempt has been successfully resisted. **Are the electors of this country prepared to entrust the conduct of this case to my political opponents,**

who were the perpetrators of the Railway Deal of 1898?

THE POLICY OF THE OPPOSITION.

In a communication addressed to the *Daily News*, under date 5th March last, the Leader of the Opposition Party outlined what he designated "his Policy." For the most part he has merely rehearsed the policy that the present Government has been so successful in carrying out during the past eight years. For seven years and more, as a member of my Government, he shared in the honour of the successful carrying out of that policy. **To-day he seems to be labouring under the strange delusion that the Liberal Party's policy can be best carried out under his leadership, with the assistance of those who have ever been most bitterly opposed to it!**

There are but one or two items in the long list of election promises contained in the Opposition leader's "manifesto" that call for special notice. First: the promise of "railway extension by the construction of branch lines to points in Trinity Bay, Bonavista Bay, Fortune Bay and Bonne Bay, as well as to Trepassey, and this without increased taxation." Every sensible man is aware that no branch railway can be built except at considerable cost, and that neither can it be operated except at considerable cost. Some provision, therefore, must of necessity be made to meet the interest on the cost of construction and to cover the probable loss on operating account. If this provision is to be made "without increased taxation," then it must, of necessity, come out of the taxes at present collected, and by so much

must some existing service be reduced.

Now we can form an approximate of the cost to the people of this country of the branch railways promised by the Leader of the Opposition from the proposal made to the Government by the Reid Newfoundland Company in 1903.

The proposal for the construction of branch railways was part and parcel of a scheme under which the Government were asked to guarantee bonds to the extent of three million dollars at four per cent., but it was made clear therein that the Government should also agree to pay the Reid Newfoundland Company the sum of fifteen thousand six hundred dollars per mile for the branch railways, in three and one-half per cent. fifty-year bonds of the Colony. I have had an estimate made of the mileage of the branch lines of railway promised by the leader of the Opposition, and it amounts to one hundred and ninety-two miles. At the figure required by the Reid Newfoundland Company—namely: fifteen thousand six hundred dollars per mile—the cost of construction and equipment would mean to the people of this Colony two million nine hundred and ninety-five thousand two hundred dollars, and the interest thereon at three and one-half per cent. would mean a charge upon the people of the Colony of one hundred and four thousand eight hundred and thirty-two dollars per year.

The average annual surplus of revenue over expenditure the past eight years has been one hundred and seven thousand dollars. If there were an absolute certainty of this surplus continuing, then it would take the whole of the same to meet the interest charge on account of these branch railways. But the leader of the Opposition has also promised a reduction of taxation; therefore the surplus would not be forthcoming; and it has to be remembered, further, that, coupled with the promise of reduction of taxation, are the further promises of a bounty for clearing land, old age pensions, the encouragement of an additional steam service to the West Indies, and an additional steam service to La brador.

Twenty-six years ago I entered the House of Assembly as a supporter of the Railway Policy introduced by the late Sir William White-way, and have ever since been one of the strongest advocates for railway extension, and I shall always favour the extension of railway facilities to such localities as shall appear to justify the same by the amount of business transacted therein. But while I am strongly in favour of railway extension to meet the demands of trade and to facilitate new enterprises, I believe that the course of an honest and economic Government should be to go cautiously and enquiringly, and not commit the country to a vast expenditure which neither existing nor prospective conditions warrant. I also believe that present pressing needs are

more in the direction of properly constructed main lines of road to connect settlements in the various Districts, and that public opinion will be better consulted by such an expenditure, **PROPERLY CARRIED OUT**, than by paying further subsidies to the Reid Newfoundland Company.

REDUCTION OF TAXATION IS PART OF THE POLICY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, as is evidenced by the fact before recited, that during the past four years they have reduced the taxes by the sum of **One million four hundred and twenty-two thousand eight hundred and forty-one dollars.**

I am entirely of opinion that the people of this country are still too heavily taxed, for at the present nearly one-third of a man's wages goes to pay the taxes on the articles of which he must needs make use. My aim shall be to still further reduce taxation until the workingmen of this country are provided with a free breakfast table: that is to say, that all the articles that enter into his food supply shall come into the country free of duty.

With regard to Old Age Pensions: from my place in the House of Assembly I have clearly defined my position in relation to the same, and have clearly indicated the source from which such provision must necessarily come—namely: out of the General Revenue of the Country—when the

old age pension scheme is adopted. A statement to the contrary would be nothing but a cruel deception. **Any scheme of old age pensions would have to be provided for upon a basis beyond peradventure**; therefore any body of men who realize their responsibility as trustees of the public are bound in honour to move very carefully in a matter of this kind. The present Government, appreciating their responsibility in the premises, and having regard to the general financial exigencies of the country, determined to call into their deliberations several gentlemen who hold the highest position in this city as financiers. These gentlemen have been gratuitously giving of their time to the consideration of this important subject, and, together with the Executive Government, are endeavouring to work out a scheme that the Legislature will be warranted in adopting, and that will commend itself to the whole community. The electors of the country may therefore confidently depend upon the present Government bringing into force such a measure at the earliest possible date.

My Government will continue the same line of action that has brought about the prosperity and contentment that our people at present enjoy, and that has upheld the honour and dignity and independence of our country.

The remarkable combination of conflicting elements that is opposing the present Government, and that is making such strenuous efforts to deceive the electors into placing it in power, may find it convenient to cover its real aims and intentions by the setting up of "planks" appropriated from the Liberal "plat

form," but such a course of procedure is hardly likely to dissipate the suspicion that justly attaches to those who have deceived and betrayed the people before, or to hide from the people the conspiracy that is lurking beneath, namely: to bring this country into the Canadian Dominion. Let the Combination now posing as the "People's Party" obtain power and we shall witness

**THE DOMINATION OF THE REID
NEWFOUNDLAND COMPANY
OVER THIS COUNTRY ;
ENDORSEMENT OF RAILWAY
BONDS ;
BANKRUPTCY ;
CONFEDERATION.**

I have stated from my place in the House of Assembly, and I repeat here, that I believe this country should work out its own salva-

tion under the ægis of the Constitution, and that its confederation with the Dominion of Canada, from an Imperial as well as a local standpoint, would not prove advantageous. I am therefore entirely opposed to Confederation, and pledge myself unreservedly to consider no proposal in that direction unless the people of Newfoundland demand such consideration at the polls.

I believe that the great mass of my countrymen are honest and patriotic, devoted to the principles of constitutional liberty and to the future welfare of the country, nor can I doubt that they will be found on Polling Day allying themselves to the side of the Liberal Party, which, through its *personnel*, its principles, and its practices, has given the best assurance to the country that it is the fittest to have the destinies of the country entrusted to its keeping, and that by active co-operation they will enable the Liberal Party to sweep the country at the polls and—
TO SAVE IT. I remain, gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

R. BOND.

ST. JOHN'S,

September 30th, 1908.

